



IN TOUCH

Newsletter by Employees, for Employees of the American Printing House for the Blind, Inc.

July/August 2006

What's All This About Changing the Name of the Museum?

Micheal Hudson, Public Affairs

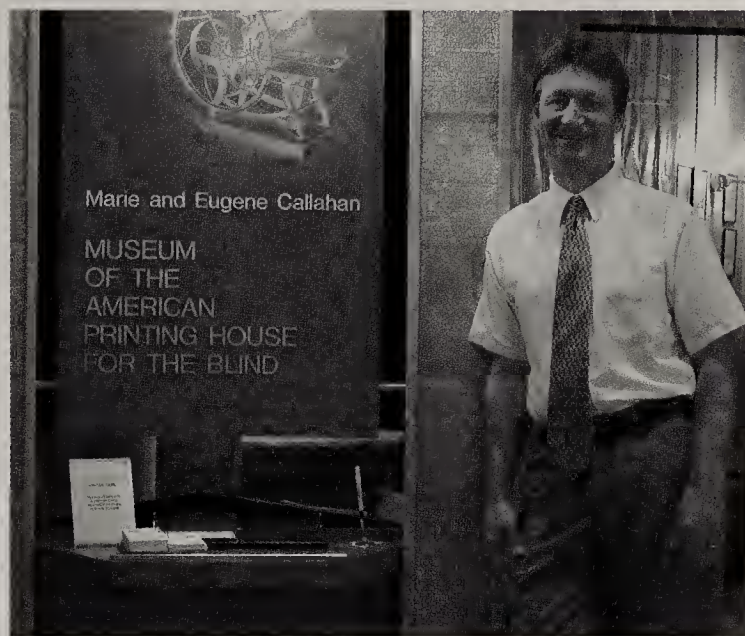
Director, Marie and Eugene Callahan Museum of the American Printing House for the Blind

Back in April, Public Affairs sent a letter to all APH employees – attached to paychecks – regarding a possible name change for the Callahan Museum.

This letter explained that the Callahan Museum has been researching its audience, studying why people visit, and why they don't. Based on that research, the

company's museum committee considered changing the museum's name and wanted to know what our employees thought about the idea. The results of the survey are interesting – but first, a little history.

The Museum of the American Printing House for the Blind opened in 1994. Most of the collections were saved through the efforts of our employees over the years. Eugene Callahan was the most generous living donor that the company has ever had, although he never worked here or used our products. His estate plan allowed APH to fund the museum for several years prior to his death in 2005. In recognition of that generosity, the museum was renamed in 1999 the Marie and Eugene Callahan Museum of the American Printing House for the Blind.



"What's in a name?" asks **Mike Hudson**

That title is pretty wordy if you're printing it on a brochure, including it in a magazine advertisement, on a banner, or with a visitors guide. And it's a mouthful in conversation with visitors, particularly groups of school kids with short attention spans. By the time you get to the end of those words, the listener probably still does not understand what the

museum is about. Certainly not in the way that you understand the purpose of the Speed Art Museum, or the Louisville Science Center, or Locust Grove Historic Home simply by hearing their names.

Over the past year, two major Louisville museums—Louisville Slugger and the Frazier—have struggled with the same problem: ensuring that their names appropriately reflect what they do and what guests can expect to experience when they visit. Both ultimately chose to change their names to help the public better understand the museum's identity. Slugger became the Louisville Slugger Museum & Factory, and the Frazier Arms Museum became the Frazier International History Museum.

And the survey said...

Our staff – every employee of APH – is an especially important part of the museum's audience, and it was crucial that we consider your thoughts and feelings about a possible name change before any change occurred. Sixty-five (65) people responded to the survey, which is very good for a survey of this type.

Here are the results:

- 79% were in favor of a name change.
- 21% felt that we should leave the name alone, at least for now.
- Of those favoring a name change, 43% felt we should go back to our original name, the American Printing House for the Blind Museum.

The rest of the responses were “all over the place.” A few would like to include the phrase “Museum & Factory.” Others preferred the APH Callahan Museum, the National Blind Education Museum, or the Museum of Blindness and Visual Impairments. Comments – and there were lots – ranged from “It would be nice if it could be something short and

catchy,” to “This really saddens me that this is coming up after his [Mr. Callahan's] death.”

This summer, we'll be inviting a national expert to Louisville to study how the museum is perceived in the Louisville Metro community, how people use our museum, and how our community is involved with us. Working with this consultant, we will develop a plan to improve those areas of our operation. Part of that plan may involve a name change – although the final decision has not yet been made.

Rest assured that, with any change in the name, we will continue to memorialize Mr. Callahan in an appropriate and respectful way. APH owes Mr. Callahan an enormous debt of gratitude, and his name will forever be connected with our museum.

Thanks to each of you who responded to the museum name change survey. Many of you expressed – in one way or another – that since our name is the first “doorway” a visitor must pass through to find our museum, we need to make sure that the “door is open wide” by using a name that clearly states who we are and what we do. **APH**

Museum Sponsors Special Saturday Programs

Micheal Hudson, *Public Affairs*



Two young visitors to APH made Valentine's Day cards.

Educational programs in the Callahan Museum have attracted more than 270 visitors to eleven different events since the Saturday Fun series was begun in November 2005. The programs began as an effort to publicize the museum's Saturday hours. Events have ranged from community open houses to tactile graphics workshops to musicians and storytellers.

“We're still in the experimental stages right now,” said museum director Mike Hudson. “Some of our ideas work better than others. We're trying to figure out what types of programs people enjoy and provide them.”

Special Saturday Programs (Continued from Page 2)

The museum's most successful events have occurred over the last four months. A walking tour of Clifton attracted

more than 60 people, and the "Bards & Storytellers" series attracted an average of 40 people to each of the three events.

The latter series, which featured fiddler **Michael Cleveland**, storyteller **Kathy Claus**, and singer/songwriter **Turley Richards**,

focused on entertainment as an historical source of independence for blind people.

"I'm not sure what I expected," said one audience member from Louisville, **Jo Coffey**, who attended

Bards & Storytellers. "But it was enlightening and fun. I'm glad I came."



Michael Cleveland and **Jeff Guernsey** perform in the Callahan Museum, with folklorist **Doug Boyd** moderating.

Publicized through the APH website, email to staff and distribution lists, flyers mailed to community groups, local newspapers, and radio, the museum sometimes has to be careful not to be too popular. "I was a little worried about the Cleveland concert," said Hudson. "Our reception hall, where most programs are held, was packed with people."

APH employees are invited and encouraged to come and to bring family and

friends. For more information about Saturday fun at APH, check the APH website at www.aph.org/museum, look on bulletin boards around the plant, or call Mike Hudson at ext. 899-2365. **APH**

Customer Comments

Rosanne Broome, *Customer Relations*

A letter sent to Karen Luckett (Customer Relations) from a customer in North Carolina...

"On June 7th we discussed returning a tape recorder for repair. I received the machine last week, and I am happy to say it works just like new. I have another identical machine which I bought last year. My experience with well-made tape recorders is that they last 9 to 10 years. Since I am 66 years old, one or both of these machines will probably last as long as I need to use cassettes."

"I have been using APH books and equipment for almost 50 years, and your products have been very useful and enjoyable. I just want you to know that I appreciate the extra time and effort you and the others at APH take to improve the quality of life for blind people." **APH**



Professional Development

Darrell Buford, Human Resources



Darrell Buford
(Human Resources)

For 14 weeks recently on Wednesday afternoons, I stood at the front door of APH saying goodnight to everyone while I stayed. Often there would be jokes like, “I see you’ve found a new occupation as a doorman” when I was letting others who work in the human resource field into the building for a weekly study group session. We were all preparing to take the national certification examination in human resource management, sponsored by the SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management).

On May 27th, I took the 6-hour exam. Because of my visual impairment, I was not allowed to take the test on the computer and learn of my results instantly – as did the others in my study group. Instead, I had to take it the old-fashioned way – with pencil and paper – and wait 3 weeks for my results. On June 19th, I received the results in the mail. I passed the exam and am now certified as a PHR (Professional in Human Resource Management).

Congratulations, Darrell! Job well done! 

NEXT ISSUE APH Featured Employee

Who is this? Some “helpful” clues...

- She once rode her bike to an elevation of 13,000 feet above sea level.
- She has lived in six different states and one foreign country.
- She has been at APH more than three years but less than ten.
- She has 120,000 “pets” working for her out in the community.
- She was voted “Most Dependable” by her senior class in high school (and she really is!)





Be first to call us if you know who this is. Becky – ext. 356, or Nancy – ext. 339.

Featured Employee: Fred Gissoni



Becky Snider, *Public Affairs*

"Sum up **Fred Gissoni** in 250 words or less? Impossible!" I said.

No mission to improve the lives of the blind and visually impaired has been too tough for Fred Gissoni (Customer Relations) - whether he was spearheading the Kentucky State Department for the Blind, master minding a revolutionary portable braille notetaker, writing user friendly manuals, or memorizing every bit of information he came across for a later instant replay to solve someone's problem.

Well before arriving at APH in 1988,

Fred's fingertips discovered APH on the brailled title page of his Elson Basic Reader while attending school in New Jersey. Today Fred channels APH customers to appropriate products and resources.

"He is irreplaceable," said president **Tuck Tinsley**. "Fred is the consummate professional. He is extremely knowledgeable and highly respected by everyone in the field of blindness."

Vice president **Gary Mudd** (Public Affairs) said he is awed by "Fred's amazing ability to remember everything and his uncanny knack for arriving at practical solutions for the unique problems faced by people who are blind - from a simple kitchen technique to the challenges of advanced technology. If he doesn't have an immediate answer, he will

persevere until he does."

Fred met his wife of 50 years, **Betty**, when they were both teaching for the New Jersey Commission for the Blind. They moved to her native Kentucky in 1956. Fred describes some of his duties over the next 32 years routinely - "directed the rehab center,

started the independent living center" - but he was truly "leaping tall buildings" as he boldly advocated for the establishment of the Kentucky Department for the Blind.

And our mild-mannered hero credits the people he served for his career counseling successes, saying, "I stood by and encouraged, suggested, reflected, and presented

alternatives, but it was those who wanted to that found jobs and led more independent lives."

But in fact, Fred has been "moving mountains" all his life to the benefit of the blind around the world. The IRS was considering employing blind people in the 1960s, but it was not yet possible to make quick calculations with a customer at the other end of the phone.

Working with **Tim Cranmer**, who adapted an abacus by adding a felt background, Fred and Betty put their heads together to write the manual for its use, impacting countless lives in a positive way forever. Nearly 45 years later, Fred is still receiving calls saying what a great difference the abacus and Fred's "tutoring" have made in so many lives.




Betty and **Fred Gissoni** and their "boss," **Dandi**, a long-haired dachshund (pictured in Fred's lap).

Featured Employee... (Continued from Page 5)

To the rescue again in the 1980s, Fred pioneered the "most significant advancement in Braille during the 20th century." He guided the technology development of the engineering crew at the Kentucky Department for the Blind that led to the *Braille 'n Speak*, laying the foundation for future notetakers. Again, Fred's manuals and tutorials made it easy for customers to work with these devices independently and immediately. Fred didn't just move mountains this time, he removed them!

How very far he has come – from his unassuming beginnings in Northvale, New Jersey where he was born, through his slightly mischievous childhood dabbling in the arts, sharpening his quick wit and amateur radio skills, through news reporting and refrigerator assembly, through Rutgers and New York University as a student and through Hadley School for the Blind and the University of Kentucky as a teacher – what a hero we have in Fred Gissoni!

True to hero form, Fred kept his "disguise" under wraps ... not one APH employee guessed his true identity from the clues in the last issue of In Touch. Turn to page 11 to find out how Fred is connected to the APH database, Fred's Head. 

APH Safety Coordinator Retires



Tuck Tinsley congratulates **Marilyn Cheatham** on her retirement.

After 27 years of service at APH – all in the Human Resources Department – **Marilyn Cheatham** retired on June 29, 2006. APH co-workers held a "mini-reception" at work, and for once, she didn't bake a single item! Co-workers (or area bakeries) did the baking in her honor. Marilyn, her husband **Vern**, and her sister-in-law **Betty** enjoyed the fellowship and delicious desserts.

Among the going-away gifts she received were a customized cookbook (with recipes submitted by APH employees) and a "memories" book from co-workers. Current and past APH employees gathered for another celebration honoring Marilyn that same evening at Mike Linnig's restaurant. *We miss you already, Marilyn!*

Raising Dog Guide Puppies

Ari Bildner, *Public Affairs*

While both staff and visitors can be distracted by the furry, four-legged “employees” working throughout the APH facility, not everyone understands the process of raising and training “dog guides,” as they are known in the field of vision.

For those who are interested, **George Williams** (Repairs) can tell you all about it. Along with his son **Jeff** and daughter-in-law **Joyce**, George has raised dog guides for three years now. He describes this activity as frustrating but ultimately rewarding.

George said that he became interested in raising dog guides when Jeff and Joyce started training dogs for the Michigan-based school, Leader Dogs for the Blind.

When they are about 10 weeks old, these specially bred dogs are given to individuals and families to raise for one year. Wearing a special harness labeled “dog guide in training,” these young dogs go everywhere with their temporary owner, preparing them for their future careers guiding blind and visually impaired partners. These “puppy raisers” train the dogs in many ways – from understanding basic commands to being comfortable in crowded public situations.

George noted a couple of unique challenges in raising dog guides. Since the dogs must accompany their owner everywhere but do not have the same legal protection as dog guides, it can be hard convincing some business owners to let them in.

“Fortunately, most places won’t turn you down,” said George. Another challenge is returning the dog to Leader Dogs for the Blind at the end of the year. Since owner and dog build strong bonds, George said that saying goodbye can be very emotional.

The Williams’ have raised a blonde Labrador named **Luther**, now living with his user in Wisconsin, and a German Shepherd named **Augen** (which means “eyes” in German), recently placed with a user in Illinois. Currently, George, Jeff, and Joyce are raising **Zephyr**, a yellow Labrador.



Mike McCarty and **Torrance**

While loving dogs and understanding the huge time commitment to the job are obvious “musts” for puppy raisers, “you also have to have a lot of patience,” added George. “They’re a lot like 2-5 year old children.” **APH**

APH Dog Guide Directory

Dog guide	Department	User
Angel	Braille	Charlotte Kelly
Corbin	Resource Services	Maria Delgado
Denver	Public Affairs	Gary Mudd
Elan	Proofreading	Vikki Kaleta
Everest	Technical Research	Keith Creasy
Jake	Technical Research	Larry Skutchan
Jill	Educational Research	Terrie Terlau
Torrance	Communications	Mike McCarty



BULLETIN BOARD

Welcome to APH, new employees! **Ari Bildner** (Public Affairs) and **Terri**

Gilmore (Educational Research).

APH Tour Guide Staff Proves to be Certifiable



In May, six APH tour guides were certified by the American Red Cross in both CPR and first aid. **Ryann Chilton, Mike Hudson, Anne Rich, Becky Snider, Brenna White, and Roberta Williams** joined 21 other APH employees who have one or both certifications.

“Staff who work with the public in the building need to be trained to handle emergencies,” said Vice President of Public Affairs **Gary Mudd**. “This is part of our emergency preparedness plan, and I thank all of the CPR and first aid certified staffers for making APH a safer place to work.”

Training included use of the Automatic External Defibrillator (AED). According to the Red Cross, about 50,000 deaths could be prevented annually in America with immediate use of AEDs.

“All our dreams come true, if we have the courage to pursue them.” **Walt Disney**

Thanks from VIPS

In the Spring issue of their newsletter, also called *in TOUCH*, Visually Impaired Preschool Services (VIPS) included a heartfelt “thank you” to individuals and businesses that helped make the 2005 holiday season happier for 12 families in the area facing hard times. APH was included in that list of a dozen sponsors. *Thanks once again to all APH staff who gave so generously to help a family with a blind or visually impaired child over the holidays. You helped create lasting memories.*

Congratulations to **Darrell Buford**, recently appointed by Kentucky Governor Ernie Fletcher’s office to serve on the State Rehabilitation Council of the Kentucky Office for the Blind. Darrell’s seat represents business, industry, and labor. *Best of luck to you in this important position, Darrell. We know you will do a great job!*



Oops! The name of **Artina Paris-Jones’** newborn grandson was misspelled in the last issue of *In Touch*. His name is **Kaden** (not Kedan) **Lee Paris**, and he’s still a cutie (pictured here at 3 months)!

BULLETIN BOARD



APH was well represented at the annual convention of the American Council of the Blind (ACB) in Jacksonville, Florida, July 7-14. Attending from Customer Relations were: **Rosanne Broome**, **Dawn Eadens**, and **Alan Lovell**. **Rodger Smith** with Technical Research also attended. The group exhibited and sold APH products. Rosanne said that "It is always very rewarding to meet our customers face to face and to see their interest in our products and in APH as a company." Next summer's ACB convention will be in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

In memory of good friends and APH co-workers



Mike Druin

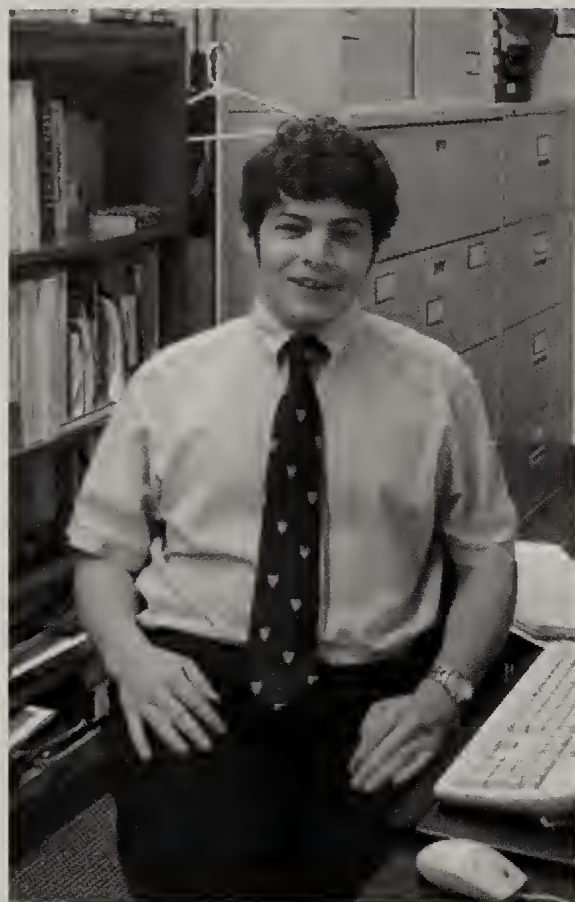
Mike Druin passed away on April 22 after an illness. He worked at APH for 29 years as an electronic technician. Mike designed and built control circuits for much of the equipment developed in-house at APH. He was an excellent technician who enjoyed the challenges of circuitry. Mike was a former union steward dedicated to helping fellow employees. In his time away from APH, Mike was a licensed ham radio operator and enjoyed country music. Mike is missed by his wife **Wilma** (Braille Transcription) and family, as well as all of his APH friends.

William Randall is also missed. "Popeye" worked as a security guard at APH, initially on assignment from Pinkerton Security Services. He was hired by APH in 1997 and worked until his death in November 2005. Popeye was a kind, caring man who loved working at APH and watching over the facility and staff.

APH retiree **Jane Kent** died on April 30. She joined APH in 1942 and worked as business office manager, and then as comptroller. She retired in 1983.

Summer 2006 Internship at APH

Ari Bildner, Public Affairs



Ari Bildner, Yale intern at APH

As I approached the end of my freshmen year at Yale and the normal frenzy to figure out summer plans ensued, I, like many of my friends, wasn't sure how to spend the summer. After hearing rave reviews about a program that brought "Yalies" to Louisville (among other off-the-beaten-path

cities) for internships, I immediately scanned the job listings on the program's website. Hoping to learn more about an area of interest to me – public relations – I noticed the opening for the public affairs position at APH.

Despite knowing little about blindness, public affairs, braille, or assistive technology at the time, I found myself several months later, in shirt and tie – with a name tag, loudspeaker and walkie-talkie for tours – at 1839 Frankfort Ave.

My training as a tour guide began immediately as I learned about the basic functions of APH. I was able to see and appreciate the noble purpose of the company, all the while keeping equally excited visitors between the yellow lines and away from tempting guide dogs.

Through my experience as a tour guide, I became fascinated with the hectic, yet coordinated operation of the entire company. Meetings with **Don Keefe**

(Development) and **Jack Decker** (Production) helped me gain a better understanding about both the development and manufacturing operation sides of this unique organization – knowledge I would use to 'continuously improve' my tours.

When not giving tours, **Roberta Williams** and Co. kept me busy with behind-the-scenes public affairs work. After noticing that APH needed a larger presence on Wikipedia, the wildly popular online encyclopedia, **Scott Blome**, **Becki Moody** (both Communications) and the PA staff entrusted me to write the first draft of the main article. I also spent many hours researching members of Congress for **Nancy Lacewell** and **Gary Mudd's** frequent trips to Washington, a task that entertained my "political junkie" side. I was also able to contribute articles to *In Touch*, meet interesting employees, and discover aspects of APH I wouldn't have known about otherwise.

Throughout the summer, I discovered many one-of-a-kind opportunities that made my summer memorable and engaging. I was able to accompany Nancy in visiting the braillists at the Kentucky Correctional Institution for Women, where I held fascinating conversations with the inmates about their experience in braille translation and plans for the future.

My deepest gratitude goes to the public affairs department, Gary Mudd, Roberta Williams, Nancy Lacewell, **Becky Snider**, **Anne Rich**, and **Michael Hudson**. Roberta helped me adjust to the characteristic hectic work day at APH, in addition to introducing me around the "River City" and public affairs professionals. From the beginning, Gary was always willing to educate me about blindness, visually impaired etiquette, and entertain every random question under the sun. Nancy challenged


Summer 2006 Internship (Continued from Page 11)

me with interesting assignments. And finally, it is hard to imagine the office without Becky, her kindness and eternal patience.

Up a half-floor, Anne Rich and Michael Hudson were always there to help make my experience that much better. In addition, there are so many other people to whom I owe the greatest appreciation, whether for a quick conversation in the hallway or a smile as I led tours in the factory.

As I end my time here, I think back to a peculiar tour I had earlier in the summer, an anecdote I think can aptly summarize my time at APH. One lazy July afternoon this summer, I was at my computer waiting to see if I would have a drop-in tour – perhaps some AAA guidebook tourists or locals who finally decided to discover more about this enormous compound sitting on the corner of Frankfort and State Streets in Louisville.

As it turned out, the tour was with two students who were blind accompanied by one of the student's parents. To say that the tour was anything but delightful would be an understatement. The blind students enthusiastically absorbed the sounds of the braille printing area, recognized the voice of a narrator with sheer delight in the talking books studio, and joyfully reminisced about elementary school days when seeing products like Quick Pick in the product display room.

Even in my short time here, I felt incredibly proud to be affiliated with APH and instantly validated for all the hard work I had put in over the summer. Thank you so much, staff of APH, for making my experience here in Louisville and at the American Printing House for the Blind so amazing! 



It started off as a collection of **Fred Gissoni's** (Customer Relations) tried and true tips and techniques for people who are blind or visually impaired. Out of Fred's head and into a catalogued database – hence the name... Fred's Head database.

Remarkably, the database continues to grow daily! **Michael McCarty** (Communications) is responsible for adding to and revising the content based on his research and suggestions from people in all walks of life.

Here are some sample topics on file:

- Organizing and identifying food packages
- Writing a grant for a blind athlete
- Troubleshooting braille note takers or other technology
- Finding accessible games

It's free! It's accessible! And it's easy to use! Try it!

www.aph.org/fh/index.html

BIRTHDAYS!



July

3 Ann Hill
10 Carl Shultz
10 Inge Formenti
10 Roberta Williams
11 Joy Robinson
11 Scott Smith
13 Martha Coogle
13 Erica Rucker
15 Kathy Coddington
15 Nancy Bayens
17 Doug Trent
17 Karen Poppe
18 Ted Zinious
18 Nancy Lacewell

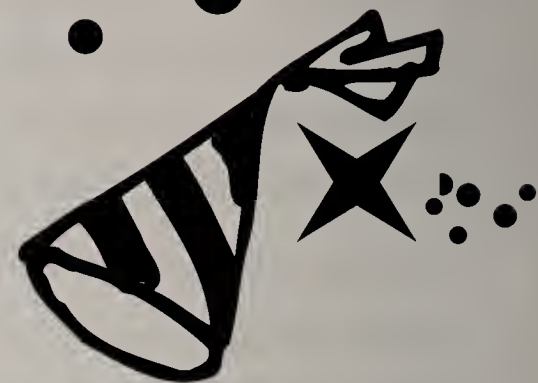
22 Kathy Peak
26 Steve Paris
26 David McGee
28 Maria Delgado
30 Tuck Tinsley
30 Joan Goodgine

August

1 Jody Bachmann
4 Betsy Burnham
4 John Ashby
5 April Keehn
7 Tony Grantz
17 Yan Zhang
17 Margaret Nix
19 Debra Harrison
20 Sandra Allen
21 Cary Crumpton
21 Terea Bethel
26 Jayma Hawkins
28 Terrie Terlau
28 Lou Harpenau
28 Linda Brown
31 Michael Haynes

September

1 Lee Wickenheiser
1 Michael Hardin
1 Lonnie Carnes
4 George Williams
5 Tim Mackison
6 Silver Bryant
10 Brian Dougherty
11 Megan Burnett
15 Jill Fox
16 Rhonda Schaefer
16 Perry Garner
19 Bill Beavin
20 Valerie Cox
23 Deborah Timmel
23 Bettie Cox
24 Erin Johnson
25 Terri Coleman
27 Kathy Smiddy
27 Butch Hoover
27 Gary Mudd
30 Robert Steffen
30 Terri Gilmore



IN TOUCH

American Printing House for the Blind, P.O. Box 6085, Louisville, KY, 40206-0085

Production Staff: **Gary Mudd**, **Nancy Lacewell** and **Becky Snider** (Public Affairs)

Design and Layout: **Kacey Roby**

Distribution Manager: **Becky Snider** (502-895-2405 ext. 356)